

**DEDICATED TO OUR COMMUNITY, OUR PROFESSION AND EACH OTHER**

**Fall 2012**

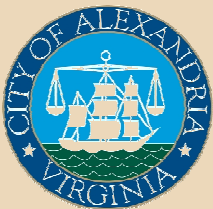


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*This newsletter is written and compiled by the Alexandria Fire Department's Community Services Unit*

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# THE RESPONDER

## Experimenting with High Rises

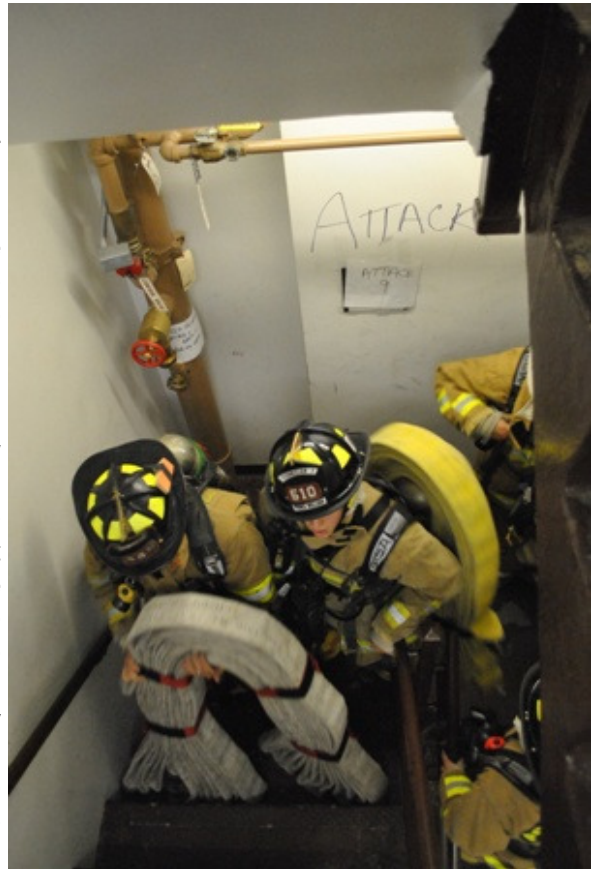
Beginning in mid-May and running through mid-July Alexandria Fire and EMS staff participated in a high-rise firefighting study conducted by the International Association of Firefighters (IAFF) and the National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST) in Crystal City, Arlington. Alexandria participated with firefighters and paramedics from Northern Virginia, Maryland and the District of Columbia in several exercises.

Arriving in the early morning fire crews were given an initial health assessment. Afterward they were fitted with a special harness that recorded each person's heart rate, respirations, temperature and other critical vital signs.

After being outfitted, the personnel were broken up and assigned to various fire companies to participate in two different exercises. Fire companies were given instructions and tasks to complete for each exercise. At that time they suited up in full turnout gear and breathing apparatus and gathered the tools they would carry and use during each exercise.

Two exercises were conducted each day. Each exercise was designed to scientifically measure the effectiveness of fighting high-rise fires based on crew size and dispatched resources. In the first exercise the crew size

was limited to three person crews. The dispatch for this exercise included more units to meet the staffing challenges of the smaller crew size. Routes to the vacant high-rise used in the exercise had been previously plotted and travel route times calculated based on the locations and run order of existing fire stations. In the first exercise, firefighters assigned to crews stationed farther away from the building were held in a staging area for the predetermined amount of time it would actually take their unit to respond from the actual fire station they were assigned to in the exercise. This meant that first arriving firefighters had to conduct multi-



**A team of Northern Virginia firefighters prepare to attack a fire on the 9th floor of a high rise during the IAFF-NIST high-rise study.**

ple tasks for a longer period of time prior to the arrival of additional resources.

The building, which was an 18 story high rise located in the heart of Crystal City, Arlington was completely vacant. No live fires were used in these exercises. Instead,

**SEE HIGH RISE, PAGE 5, COLUMN 1.**

## Fire News

A lot has been going on during the summer.

### Three AFD Members Graduate Virginia Fire Officer Academy



The 2012 graduating class of the Virginia Fire Officer's Academy held at George Mason University.

Lieutenants Gregory Cook and Douglas Jackson and Firefighter Ricky Muse attended the Virginia Fire Officers Academy in June. The Academy is sponsored by the Virginia Fire Chief's Association. The weeklong school focuses on company officers and providing them with the knowledge needed to provide the leadership required in their positions. Coursework focuses on a number of subject areas to improve leadership skills, especially in the area of human resources, with the focus towards being a good leader.

The Academy is held annually and draws company officers and firefighters from all over the State.

This year the Academy was held at George Mason University.

AFD members and their classmates graduated on June 22. Congratulations go out to Greg, Doug and Ricky.

### Field Training Officer

The Field Training Officer (FTO) program kicked off with the assignment of Lieutenant Wells Wilson to the Professional Development Center. Wells

will be in charge of designing and implementing the FTO program for Fire Suppression. Additional staff to run the program are slated to be brought on later in 2012 with the goal of having a full time FTO assigned to each suppression shift. The FTOs will support and enhance the daily operational training activities of the department. The Department is also looking at some options to secure additional part-time staff to deliver Emergency Medical Services (EMS) Continuing Education Units (CEUs) to basic and advanced life support certified staff at Fire Station 202 on a regular basis.

### Station Alerting

In June representatives from Westnet visited the Department and demonstrated their "First-in Fire Station Alerting Systems". The 18 wheeled tractor drawn display trailer contained mock ups of a fire station bay, day room, bunk room and 911 center. Westnet staff were on hand to demonstrate and answer questions concerning their station alerting system.



The Westnet demonstration trailer on display at the Department's Professional Development Center.

The Department is moving forward with a replacement for the current Zetron station alerting system. The new Fire Station 210 will receive the new alerting system when a contract is awarded. Existing fire stations will be retrofitted with the new alerting system.

The new alerting system has many capabilities to display information about incoming emergency dispatches, equipment to be dispatched and other relevant information that firefighters and medics need in order to respond to emergencies. The new system, when installed will be a great enhancement to emergency response capabilities.

### Fleet Upgrades

After several years of assessing, planning, meeting, and communicating about the Department's vehicle and equipment needs, the City Manager approved a comprehensive fleet upgrade and management plan. Initially four new engines and one tractor drawn aerial ladder truck were ordered in FY2012. The ladder truck is scheduled to arrive in late Fall 2012 and be in service at the start of 2013. The four new engines will arrive shortly afterward and be in service in Winter 2013.

Five more engines (including one for Station 210) and one new tower ladder were ordered in FY2013. The engines are expected to be in service by Summer 2013 and the tower ladder in service by the Fall of 2013.

Four medic units (including one for Station 210) are in the process of being ordered. A new Special Operations support vehicle and a host of duty vehicles are also being worked on and will be ordered shortly.

**SEE FIRE NEWS, PAGE 4, COL.1**



## Community Engagement

### United Way Makes Donation to Joshua Weissman Fund



United Way of the National Capital Region presents a check to Alexandria Firefighters Union President David Denardo. Pictured l to r: Emergency Management Coordinator Mark Penn, Assistant Chief Rudolph Thomas, Assistant Chief Andrew Snead, United Way Corporate Partnerships Manager Kimberly Tate, Local 2141 President David Denardo, United Way Director of Corporate Partnerships Francis Melson, Fire Chief Adam Thiel.

On June 26, the United Way of the National Capital Area made a donation to the Joshua Weissman Memorial Fund. The presentation made at the United Way Worldwide Headquarters in Alexandria, was attended by Fire Chief Adam Thiel and members of the Departments Executive Team. Alexandria Firefighters Union (IAFF Local 2141) President David Denardo accepted the donation check from Ms. Francis Melson, Director of Corporate Partnerships and Ms. Kimberly Tate, Corporate Partnerships Manager for the United Way.

The donation will help defray expenses and the financial needs of Weissman's surviving spouse. Weissman died in the line of duty on February 9 from injuries he suffered while responding to a vehicle fire on Interstate 395 on February 8, 2012.

### Friendship Firehouse Festival

On August 4 the Department once again participated in the annual Friendship Firehouse Festival held at the Friendship Firehouse Museum on South Alfred Street. A warm, sunny

day brought out many visitors to the festival which celebrates the founding date of Alexandria's oldest fire company. The Department provided fire and EMS equipment as well as staffing an outreach table. Many visitors engaged the firefighters and medics in conversation while touring the equipment on display.

Hundreds of families participated in the day long event that celebrates Alexandria's past and present firefighters and EMS providers.



Medic II Karen Lopez talks with one of the hundreds of visitors at the annual Friendship Firehouse Festival.

### National Night Out

On August 7 Department members

fanned out to communities around the City along with members of the Police Department and Office of the Sheriff in recognition of National Night Out. Despite the high temperatures of the day,



Members of Engine Company 201 (l) and Fire Chief Adam Thiel (r) speak with a resident during National Night Out.

many communities still held evening events.

Firefighters and medics rotated among many communities speaking to residents; providing outreach materials on fire prevention and life safety tips; and informing the public about the services offered by the Alexandria Fire Department.

It was a great evening of community engagement that left a positive impression on many who attended on of the many events held that evening.

### Safe Kids Media Event



EMS Ops Manager Brian Hricik speaks with the media about the dangers of leaving children unattended in vehicles during warm weather.

On August 17 the Department participated in a Safe Kids Foundation media

**SEE COMMUNITY, PAGE, 6, COL. 1**



## Fire News From Page 2.



The new tractor drawn ladder truck is near completion at the factory and will soon be delivered to the Department.



Two of the recently ordered pumper chassis awaiting delivery to the factory for completion of the remaining work.

A lot of work over many years went into making these purchases a reality. Many people were involved in making this happen including the members of the apparatus committee, fiscal and administrative staff. Special recognition goes to Battalion Chief Robert Robinson and Fiscal Officer Matt Bosse for their tireless work on this plan.

## 40th Fire Recruit School

Twenty four new Firefighter—Rescuers began their formal training with the Department on October 1. The number of new recruits include replacement of existing firefighters who have retired or left the Department as well as staffing for the new Fire Station 210 which will open in the Winter of 2014.

These men and women will undergo rigorous training in firefighting and emergency medical processes with an anticipated graduation date in March 2013.

## Polish Delegation Visits Alexandria Fire Department.

On July 9 five emergency response / crisis management planners and their interpreters along with representatives from the U.S. State Department visited Fire Station 209. The group was visiting the United States as part of the U.S. State Department's International Visitor Leadership Program. The program "seeks to build mutual understanding between the U.S. and other nations through carefully designed short term visits to the U.S. for current and emerging foreign leaders", according to the official website. The delegation met with Fire Chief Adam Thiel and discussed the Department's experiences in preparedness and response to large scale incidents. The two hour visit included a tour of the Department's hazardous materials response capabilities as well as a discussion of current and future plans for the Hazardous Materials Team. The interaction between the Polish delegation and the Department was very positive and informative. The exchange of experiences and ideas about preparedness and crisis management was invaluable.



Fire Chief Adam Thiel talks with the Polish delegation about the Ethanol Foam trailer at Station 209 during the delegation's visit to the City.

ble. The Delegation thanked the Department for their hospitality and exchange of ideas.



Fire Department Chaplain Nathan Krause gives the Invocation at the ground breaking ceremony for Fire Station 210.

## AFD Chaplain Appointment

On October 3 Firefighter Nathan Krause was appointed to serve as the Alexandria Fire Department (AFD) Chaplain. Firefighter Krause has an extensive background in chaplaincy, having served in Florida as Chaplain at Haines City Fire Rescue, Winter Haven Fire Department, Polk County Critical Incident Stress Management Team, and the State of Florida Disaster Behavioral Health Response Team. Firefighter Krause holds a Bachelor's degree in Theology from Southern Adventist University and a Master of Divinity degree from Andrews University. 🚒

**High Rise from Page 1.**

One of several flame and smoke generators located in an office space on the 9th floor to simulate actual fire conditions.

the facilitators used state of the art fire simulators, heaters and theatrical smoke generators. The effect was amazing. Except for the absence of the higher temperatures experienced in actual fire situations along with the toxicity of real smoke, the conditions cre-

conditions. The actual exercise was modeled after a real office fire conducted by NIST. The data extracted from that experiment was programmed into the fire simulation software. In essence, the simulated fire grew in intensity and spread throughout the workspace just like the real fire studied by NIST.

Firefighters used hose lines filled with sand to simulate the weight and rigidity of fire hoses filled with pressurized water. Several rescue dummies were located within the fire area which had to be rescued. Other tasks including pulling ceil-

The second exercise utilized 4 person crews and less fire companies. The same scenario was run again with the larger crews and the results were captured.

Time to reach the fire; complete vital tasks; and extinguish the fire were all measured. Vital signs were recorded and fed into a data base at the conclusion of each exercise from the harnesses worn by all participants. Exercises were run throughout the day before wrapping up around 4pm each afternoon.

With the exercises complete, the analysis has begun. Once complete, the findings will be published and shared by IAFF and NIST. This is the first scientific study of its kind and will have bearing on the future of high rise firefighting and how Departments deal with this type of incident in the years to come. 🚒



Firefighters remove a "victim" overcome by smoke on the 9th floor. The victim was a rescue training dummy used by fire departments across the country to train for victim rescues.

ated looked and felt very real.

Firefighters arriving on the fire floor were met with heavy smoke and fire

ing tiles, looking for hot spots, etc. were also performed by the firefighters.



Captain Chris Kunkle serves as Division Commander on the 9th floor directing fire operations at that location.



### Community, From Page 3.

event at George Washington Middle School. EMS Operations Manager Brian Hricik spoke at the event which was designed to raise awareness of hyperthermia emergencies and deaths caused when children are left unattended in locked vehicles. The event demonstrated how quickly the temperature inside a parked vehicle with no air conditioning and all windows rolled up can rise to over 125 degrees while the outside temperature remains under 100 degrees.

In 2010 forty nine children died of hyperthermia when they were left unattended in locked vehicles with no ventilation. The issue raised at the media event is a positive step towards lowering or eliminating that number all together.



Firefighter Jodi Renner heads towards the finish line at the annual Fire Chief's 5K Run / Walk event.

### Fire Chief's 5K Fun Run / Walk

On August 22 members of the Department and their families joined Fire Chief Adam Thiel for a celebratory 5K run from the Department's Professional Development Center over to National Harbor and back. The event is held annually except for in 2011 when Alexandria faced a major east coast earthquake. The event which is near the anniversary of Chief Thiel's hiring date with the City celebrated his 5th year with the City.

It was well attended and enjoyed by all.

### AFD and labor groups bring in large donations for Muscular Dystrophy

Over Labor Day weekend, the Alexandria Fire Department held the annual "Fill the Boot" campaign in support of the Muscular Dystrophy Association and their fight against neuromuscular diseases. This effort has been providing local children and adults suffering from these often debilitating diseases with the support they need, as well as funding research in hopes of finally discovering cures.

Labor members and AFD staff collected \$17,510.77. The Department also dealt with a heavy call volume, inclement weather, training events and meetings, which all competed with time devoted to this event. In the end, the fundraising goal was reached and the funds will go to a very worthy cause. Congratulations to all who participated.

### Alexandria Titans "First Responders" Day.

On September 9 members of the Department along with staff from the Police Department and Office of the Sheriff attended a special 9/11 ceremony in honor of the September 11, 2001 victims and the tragedy our country faced. The ceremony was part of the annual Alexandria Titans "First Responders" Day. Public Safety attendees were recognized for their



AFD members participate in a coin toss at one of several tournament football games during Titan's First Responder Day.

### sacrifices made as first responders.

They also participated in one of several coin tosses for the tournament games played by the young players that day.

### Remembering 9-11

Members of the Fire and Police Departments and the Office of the Sheriff gathered with City leaders and the community in front of City Hall on the evening of September 11 to remember the 11th anniversary of the terrorist attacks on New York, Washington, D . C . a n d



The community gather at City Hall for the annual 9-11 Remembrance Service.

Shanksville, Pennsylvania.

The weather of the day bore an eerie similarity to the weather 11 years ago. Beautiful clear skies and a light breeze with warm temperatures brought many out to the ceremony held in Market Square as the sun slowly set.

Alexandria's Mayor William D. Euille officiated the ceremony which featured speeches by Undersheriff Tony Davis, Chief of Police Earl Cook and Fire Chief Adam Thiel.

Eleven years later it continues to be important to remember those who gave their lives while saving others as well as those who lost their lives because of the act of terrorism. We will never forget.

### Tribute to First Responders

On September 19 Clyde's of Alexandria once again held their annual Tribute to First Responders event. Each year the restaurant pays tribute to the men and women who protect the community. The restaurant also supports the efforts of Operation Homefront which offers emergency aid and morale to our troops, the families they leave behind and to the returning wounded warriors.

The event was well attended by area police, fire and sheriff departments, including those in Alexandria. 🚒

## Fall 2012 Run Statistics (July through September)

	Unit	EMS	SUP	TOTAL	Current Yr.	Previous Yr.
Station 201	E201	147	192	339	993	1376
Station 202	M202	483	89	572	1666	2113
	U202	2	5	7	30	55
<b>Total</b>		<b>485</b>	<b>94</b>	<b>579</b>	<b>1696</b>	<b>2168</b>
Station 203	E203	140	186	326	953	1178
	T203	16	173	189	1206	1028
<b>Total</b>		<b>156</b>	<b>359</b>	<b>515</b>	<b>2159</b>	<b>2206</b>
Station 204	E204	185	184	369	1090	1529
	T204	35	240	275	1007	1428
<b>Total</b>		<b>220</b>	<b>424</b>	<b>644</b>	<b>2097</b>	<b>2957</b>
Station 205	E205	201	290	491	1479	2087
	M205	560	158	718	2092	2769
<b>Total</b>		<b>761</b>	<b>448</b>	<b>1209</b>	<b>3571</b>	<b>4856</b>
Station 206	E206	291	352	643	1816	1921
	M206	597	158	755	2133	2734
	R206	87	128	215	684	616
<b>Total</b>		<b>975</b>	<b>638</b>	<b>1613</b>	<b>4633</b>	<b>5271</b>
Station 207	E207	265	253	518	1491	2004
	M207	492	99	591	1833	2396
<b>Total</b>		<b>757</b>	<b>352</b>	<b>1109</b>	<b>3324</b>	<b>4400</b>
Station 208	E208	373	379	752	2128	2752
	M208	571	151	722	2114	2817
	T208	76	337	413	1227	1634
<b>Total</b>		<b>1020</b>	<b>867</b>	<b>1887</b>	<b>5469</b>	<b>7203</b>
Station 209	E209	175	186	361	1033	1365
	H209	4	13	17	46	63
	S209	7	9	16	184	526
<b>Total</b>		<b>186</b>	<b>208</b>	<b>394</b>	<b>1263</b>	<b>1954</b>
Peak Time Medics	M213	2	1	3	47	443
	M214	147	35	182	662	576
<b>Total</b>		<b>149</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>185</b>	<b>709</b>	<b>1019</b>
Station totals		<b>4856</b>	<b>3618</b>	<b>8474</b>	<b>25914</b>	<b>33410</b>



## Hot Shots

Here are a few photos of activities over the past several months



Left: AFD staff train on Metro rail safety at the Eisenhower Metro Yard.

Right: Medics and firefighters remove an injured worker from a basement foundation. #12-8639



Left: Medics and firefighters treat one of three patients at an auto accident at Stevenson & Walker. #12-14278

Right: Medics and firefighters treat a worker who fell 30 feet in a building under construction. #12-13584



Left: Firefighters extinguish an attic fire in a residence on Russell Road. #12-13172

Right: Firefighters and Hazardous Materials Team members assist Police on an incident at Bluestone Road. #12-13763.



Left and Right: Members of the community enjoy an afternoon of touring fire and EMS equipment as well as engaging AFD staff while attending the Friendship Firehouse Festival.

